

# The Lion

THE SEEN & THE UNSEEN

The Two Worlds of John Henry Newman

November 2011 Vol. CXXXVI, No. 11

*An Unofficial Newsletter for Members Only of  
Saint Mark's Parish, Denver, Colorado*

*Founded 1875*

"I believe in one God, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things, visible and invisible."

We begin November with the Feast of All Saints and follow immediately with the observance of All Souls Day on the 2nd of November. These are days when the faithful would do well to attend the Liturgy and be mindful of that much greater world beyond this world and be mindful of all those we love who have gone before us through the gate of death. Please plan to attend church both days. It is most wholesome to place a bit of paper with the names to be commemorated in the basin to be brought to the Altar on All Souls Day. This act of remembrance is an offering for those remembered and it is an act of faithful witness on our part. Faith is expressed in the act of going to church and faith is expressed in many charitable works. An obligation I have to the late V. Rev'd Fr. Donald Lloyd, D.D. is to provide a memorial to his parents either at St. Mark's or at St. Laurence basilica.

All these obligations, the memorials, the remembrances, the provision of memorial funds, are part of our expression of the Faith we share with the Saints in light and with the faithful departed of the church expectant. The following essay seems to declare this faith with a particular emphasis. It was first published in *The New Oxford Review*. -Fr. John

*All Saints Day, 1 November, Tuesday*  
Mass at 7:00 AM, 12 Noon, 7:00 PM  
*All Souls Day, 2 November, Wednesday*  
Mass at 7:00 AM, 12 Noon, 7:00 PM



*Paulist Father Robert A. O'Donnell celebrated the sixtieth anniversary of his ordination on May 1, 2011. Since receiving his Ph.D. from the University of Louvain in Belgium in 1955, he has taught philosophy in New York City; Washington, D.C.; Rome; Geneva; and Jerusalem. He retired this year after teaching forty semesters in the Neumann pre-theology program at St. Joseph's Seminary (Dunwoodie) in Yonkers, New York.*

ON OCTOBER 2, 2008, HIS GRAVE WAS OPENED. No scrap of his flesh, no chip of his bone was found. The total content of the grave was a bronze nameplate, a few bronze casket handles, and two tassels from his cardinal's galero. And yet, one year ago, on September 19, 2010, Pope Benedict XVI at Birmingham, England, declared him to be "blessed," a living, Christian hero. Before returning to the Vatican, Pope Benedict described John Henry Newman to be of the caliber of a Doctor of the Church, a title previously reserved for thirty men and three women who are honored by the Catholic Church, not alone as saints, but also as extraordinary intellectuals and authors. There is no trace remaining of Newman's existence on planet earth, so where is he? The Church believes that he is among the blessed with God in Heaven, in another world, as real as our own world of sensation, though not seen.

John Henry Newman wrote and preached about this world in a sermon he entitled "The Invisible World" (*Parochial and Plain Sermons*, vol. 4; sermon 13). He first preached it in the Anglican parish church of his sister Harriet and her husband, Tom Mozley, in the town of Cholderton, Wiltshire. Newman took as his text for this sermon a passage from 2 Corinthians: "We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporal: but the things which are not seen, are eternal" (2 Cor. 4:18).



He starts by reminding us that we profess our faith in this unseen world each time we recite the Creed at Sunday Mass. "There are two worlds, 'the visible and the invisible,' as the Creed speaks, the world we see and the world we do not see; and the world we do not see exists as really as the world which we see." Yet the world which we see appears so real to our senses that "it seems to leave no room for any other world." Newman rejects the notion held by many that this "other" world does not exist at this present moment, but begins after death: "No: it exists now, though we see it not."

He offers as an example of this fact that the shepherds tending their sheep at the time of Christ's birth not only saw but heard the voices of "those blessed spirits who praise God day and night." The world which we do not see is a world of spirits, and "on the whole a much higher world than that which we do see. First of all because He is there, Almighty God, who is above all beings, who has created all." Newman explains:

We know [He] exists more really and absolutely than any of those fellowmen whose existence is conveyed to us through the senses.... It appears then that the things which are seen are only a part, and but a secondary part of the beings about us, were it only on this ground, that God Almighty, the Being of beings, is not in their number, but among "the things which are not seen." Once, and once only, for thirty-three years, has He condescended to become one of the beings which are seen, when He, the second Person of the ever-blessed Trinity, was, by an unspeakable mercy, born of the Virgin Mary into this sensible world. And then He was seen, heard, handled; He ate, He drank, He slept, He conversed.... But excepting this brief period, his presence has never been perceptible.... He came, He retired beyond the veil: and to us individually, it is as if He had never showed himself.... Yet, "He liveth evermore."

Newman explains further that the souls of the dead are also in that other world: "They live as they lived before; but that outward frame through which they were able to hold communion with other men is in some way, we know not how, separated from them, and dries away and shrivels up as leaves may drop off a tree." Newman's own empty tomb lends emphasis to his point here.

Angels too are inhabitants of the invisible world. Concerning them, Newman says, "much more is told us than concerning the souls of the faithful departed." While the latter have disappeared "beyond the veil" and have ceased communicating with us, angels "are actively employed among us in the Church." They watch over and defend even the humblest of us. "The world of spirits, then, though unseen, is present; present, not future, not distant. It is not above the sky, it is not beyond the grave; it is now and here; the kingdom of God is among us."

The bard of Birmingham closes his sermon by offering the springtime as a "sample of what the material world can do at God's command," and as a harbinger of things to come:

Except for his experience of former springs...who could conceive two or three months before that the face of nature, which then seemed so lifeless, should become so splendid and varied? How different is a tree when leaves are on it and off it!... The season may delay, but come it will. And so it is with the coming of that eternal spring for which all Christians are waiting. Come it will.... Therefore we say day by day, "thy Kingdom come".... The earth which we see...is not enough. We know much more lies hid in it than we see. A world of Saints and Angels, a glorious world, the palace of God.... What we see is the outward shell of an eternal kingdom; and on that kingdom we fix the eyes of our faith.... And we earnestly desire and pray for the dissolution of all that we see, from our longing after that which we do not see.

Now that John Henry Newman has been beatified by Pope Benedict XVI, and now that it is expected that he will be declared a saint and possibly a Doctor of the Church (perhaps by the same Pope Benedict), it seems appropriate to re-examine his writings. In relation to the sermon quoted above, one might ask why, in his early years as an Anglican vicar, Newman turned his attention to the "invisible world." Belief in a world which we cannot see might be described as a *sine qua non* precondition of the Christian faith. Without it, no other Christian doctrine makes sense. Why did Newman choose to say so much about something that goes without saying? One of his most recent biographers, Fr. Dermot Mansfield, S.J., suggests that Newman "treats with great formal



beauty that theme central to him all his life" — i.e., the theme of the simultaneous existence of the visible and invisible worlds. From his earliest Anglican years, the faith of John Henry Newman was markedly an evangelical faith. It began, in 1816, as a Protestant "evangelicalism" (as he himself called it), including an anti-Catholic stress on fundamentalism and on the principle of sola scriptura. In later years he dissociated himself from Protestant evangelicalism and grew in a Catholic evangelical faith, which sees the Church as a missionary body announcing the good news of the Gospels to all peoples everywhere.

Newman remained an evangelical Catholic until his death on August 11, 1890. His sermon "The Invisible World," which he composed and delivered before his fortieth birthday, gives us hints of his evangelical goal:

Men think that they are lords of this world, and may do as they will. They think this earth their property, and its movements in their power; whereas it has other lords besides them, and is the scene of a higher conflict than they are capable of conceiving. It contains Christ's little ones whom they despise, and His Angels whom they disbelieve.

Newman, during all his life, wrestled with the rational preambles of faith. This wrestling, which nurtured his evangelical faith, led to the birth of the Oxford Movement, to "Tracts for the Times," to his reception into the Catholic Church in 1845, and ultimately to his beatification in 2010. And the rational preambles of faith with which he wrestled, though many, are basically two: (1) It is a rational act to believe in the existence of God; (2) it is a rational act to recognize that we, who were created by God in His own image and likeness, are answerable to Him for our free decisions. Perhaps nowhere in Newman's writings does he speak more clearly of these rational preambles of faith than in his *Grammar of Assent*:

If, as is the case, we feel responsibility, are ashamed, are frightened, at transgressing the voice of conscience, this implies that there is One to whom we are responsible, before whom we are ashamed, whose claims upon us we fear. If, on doing wrong, we feel the same tearful, broken-hearted sorrow which overwhelms us as in hurting a mother, if, on doing right we feel the same sunny serenity of mind, the same soothing satisfactory delight which follows our receiving praise from a father, we cer-

tainly have within us the image of some Person to whom our love and veneration look.

In 1833, twelve years before his conversion to Catholicism, John Henry Newman traveled to Italy. After spending several weeks under the friendly Italian sun, Newman was delayed in returning home by illness. He used the time to compose a poem that would become one of the most revered hymns ever written in the English language, "Lead Kindly Light":

Lead Kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom,

Lead Thou me on!

The night is dark, and I am far from home —

Lead Thou me on!

Keep Thou my feet; I do not ask to see

The distant scene, — one step enough for me.

I was not ever thus, nor pray'd that Thou

Shouldst lead me on.

I loved to choose and see my path; but now

Lead Thou me on!

I loved the garish day, and, spite of fears,

Pride ruled my will: remember not past years.

So long Thy power hath blest me, sure it still

Will lead me on,

O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent, till

The night is gone;

And with the morn, those angel faces smile

Which I have loved long since, and lost awhile.

"Lead Kindly Light" is more than a poem; it is a prayer. In answer to his poem-prayer, the Kindly Light led John Henry Newman through another fifty-seven years of life, forty-five of which he lived as a Roman Catholic, the final twelve of which as a member of the College of Cardinals. This holy man has taken his place in the invisible world he described so beautifully. May he now obtain many blessings for the Church he loved so deeply. §



*It is well known that the Episcopal Bishop of Fond du Lac, Charles Grafton, travelled to Russia in 1903. He was a dear friend of Archbishop Tikhon of New York and in every way fostered the most cordial relations between the Russian Orthodox and the Anglican Churches. Only the next year, 1904, Archbishop Tikhon visited and blessed St. Mark's Parish in Denver. The following are interesting narratives of Bishop Grafton's expedition to Russia. What a wonderful experience some fifteen years before the Bolshevik destruction of Russia. We can be thankful for these grace filled memoirs of the world before the War. -Fr John*

From *Life and Letters of W J Birbeck*,  
Longmans Green and Co. 1922, pages 248-249.

Grand Hotel d'Europe, Rue Michel,  
Petersbourg; September 14/27, 1903.

**T**HIS PLACE HAS REUNION with the English Church in the air. It is quite extraordinary how people are talking about it. It is chiefly the Metropolitan Antonius, who has never ceased to work for it since he was with us in England. And just now politically the Russians are much more friendly, which is all a gain. Bishop Grafton has been splendidly received. I wrote to the frontier about him, and when he got there the apartments for Royalties had been got ready for him, with a sumptuous lunch, a brand-new sleeping car had been put on the train, and we had a large compartment to ourselves the whole way to St. Petersburg. To-day is the Exaltation of Holy Cross, and last night we went to the 'All-Night Service' (Vespers and Matins) at the great Alexander Nevski Lavra. Sabler came with us, and had arranged a splendid place in the choir just opposite the 'Royal Gates' for the Bishop. It was a gorgeous service, lasting four hours, with the Exarch of Georgia, two other Bishops, eight Archimandrites and about thirty other ecclesiastics in vestments, and two choirs, the Metropolitan's and the Monks', of about sixty voices each, and a congregation of about 4000, and with all that splendid ceremonial which you can see nowhere else in the world; and the dear old Bishop, with his purple cassock and beautiful face, was supremely happy, and they treated him just like a Bishop all about the censings, etc. At the end of the service after Gloria in excelsis there is the solemn lowering and raising of the Cross, towards East, West, South, North, and East, while 40 Kyrie eleisons are sung after the deacons have prayed for the Emperor, the Metropolitan, the whole Church, all



Christians in trouble, and the monastic community, and then three great prostrations with 'We worship thy Cross, O Lord, and praise and glorify thy holy Resurrection,' etc., and then began the Veneration of the Cross in the middle of the nave, and we went down with the other ecclesiastics and did what they did, and then the Exarch of Georgia before the whole congregation embraced the Bishop! It was really most moving, and so was the Liturgy this morning at St. Isaac's, where just the same sort of arrangements were made in his honour. It is such a blessing to have a Bishop who knows how to behave like a Bishop, and does what he ought to icons and relics, and I'm sure he is making a splendid impression.

The Exarch of Georgia called, and we had a long talk. He put some very searching questions about the seven sacraments. I bolstered up the Anglican distinction between Sacraments generally necessary to Salvation, and ended in a chaff about Ordination not being necessary for me. Whereupon he replied that it was, otherwise I could not receive any Sacrament at all whereupon I asked him whether marriage was necessary for him as otherwise there would be no Bishops to be ordained! He then said our catechism ought to be translated then they could see what our Church said about all seven sacraments! To which I replied, that the catechism was written for children preparing for confirmation, what could they have to do with marriage, ordination or extreme unction? He evidently knew some of the weak points in our harness!

On Monday afternoon we had a long visit from Father John of Cronstadt. He and the Bishop got on splendidly with one another and talked a great deal about unity. We discovered that they were both 73 and that they were both ordained in 1855! I told Father John that he didn't look a bit older than when I first met him 14 years ago, on the north of Lake Onega. He said: "You see I say the Liturgy every day, and that renews my life." I then told him that the Bishop did the same, and we shewed him his little portable altar, and I told him how the Bishop had celebrated every day on the boat coming across from America as well as here. He then knelt down unfolded the corporal and kissed where the vessels stand, and then the picture of the crucifixion behind, and prayed there. It was all very beautiful. By the time he went away, all the servants in the hotel had collected in the passage and on the staircase, and people from outside had invaded the place, as well as a great crowd in the streets. I walked down with him, and heard one poor girl come and



tell him that her sister was very very ill, and ask him to pray for her. "What is her name," said Father. "John Anna," said the girl. "Yes I will pray," said Father John, and put his hands round her head. In the entrance there was an old woman determined to get to him. One of the porters pushed her away, and she dashed round Father John's brougham, and, like lightning, opened the door on the other side, and when Father John got in there, she was kneeling inside the carriage with her head on the floor.

We went off yesterday to the Ivanovski monastery on the Kapnofka, arriving at 9 o'clock. Father John celebrated. We were in the altar (Sanctuary). As usual, he celebrated with great freedom, but most devoutly. At the words of institution, after "This is my Body," he turned round towards the people who are of course the other side of the Royal Doors, holding his right hand out as he said the rest, and so with the chalice. While he prayed for the living and dead, he held the edge of the paten against his forehead, and then placed his forehead on the outside of the chalice during the rest of the great intercession. We made the acquaintance of Captain Tzervitski, and had tea with Father John afterwards. We were shown his bedroom and study, and on his study table was his diary, which is apparently public property as Tzervitski read out an entry about yesterday, beginning; "I bless the Lord' for allowing me to visit the American Bishop Grafton, and to talk with him about praying for the Reunion of the Church." His entry unfortunately was not finished.

*The Western Rite Conference at Wappingers Falls, New York was sponsored by the Russian Orthodox Church and visited by Metropolitan Hilarion and His Grace, Bishop Jerome. This account is by the V. Rev'd Nicholas Alford of St. Gregory the Great Parish, Washington, D.C.*

THIS PAST WEEK I had the blessing of attending the "Canonical Orthodox Western Rite Conference 2011", hosted by the ROCOR Western Rite Vicariate. We met in a Roman Catholic retreat house in Wappingers Falls, NY. Metropolitan Hilarion of ROCOR welcomed the group and Bp. Jerome was present for most of the conference. There were about fifty in attendance (about 20 ROCOR Western Rite clergy, about 10 Eastern Rite clergy, Fr. Edward Hughes, Fr. John Connely, Fr. Lester Bundy and myself, two continuing Anglican clergy,

a Lutheran pastor and about a dozen lay people). Fr. Anthony Bondi, who formerly served as the archbishop for most of the ROCOR WR clergy before they came into the canonical church, continues to serve as the administrator of the ROCOR Western Rite Vicariate and presided over the conference.

A full round of liturgical services was offered, with Vespers and Compline in the evenings, Mass in the mornings and Sext at Noon. The services took a variety of forms. Vespers and Compline the first evening were according to the modern language version of the Fraternity of St. Gregory, with the addition of "The Rite of Corporate Confession According to the Use of St. John of Kronstadt." The first morning's liturgy was a Solemn Pontifical Mass celebrated by Bp. Jerome, essentially in the Gregorian form, in Latin and with a professional quartet of singers brought up from NYC singing the chant, the Byrd Mass for Four Voices and the Byrd Ave Verum Corpus; all Orthodox Clergy were invited to con-celebrate. Vespers and Compline on that day and the following were offered according to the Sarum and Gregorian forms. The Liturgy of St. Tikhon was offered on the second morning by Fr. John Connely, ably assisted by Subdeacon John and acolytes Oliver and Daniel from St. Mark's with others filling in the other roles needed for a Solemn liturgy. Fr. Lester Bundy preached on this feast of St. Linus (on the Old Calendar). This liturgy helped to assuage any fears of the Continuing Anglicans present that they would have to give up their liturgical heritage. Fr. John also officiated at the English Office that evening.

The final mass was offered according to the Liturgy of St. Germanus (sometimes called the 'Gallican' liturgy, though recreated with other Western and Byzantine elements); ROCOR has one parish in Iowa which uses this liturgy. It was very interesting to see the great variety of liturgical practice found within the ROCOR parishes; our Antiochian liturgies are also authorized for their use.



A number of talks were given. Bp. Jerome and Abbot James Deschane spoke about the history of the Western Rite. Fr. Peter Guilianotti from San Deigo, California spoke about evangelism and building up a parish. Fr. Jerome Watson from New York spoke about Phyletism and lessons from Scripture concerning confusion of faith and ethnicity. I was invited to speak about the history and meaning of the various elements of the Liturgy of St. Gregory. Two sessions were held for the clergy wives present.



The ROCOR Western Rite clergy had a meeting of their own, but most of the sessions were open to all. Three periods of group discussion were devoted to reservations expressed by Metropolitan Hilarion and others concerning some practices within the Western Rite, particularly the feast of Corpus Christi and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, the feast of and devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and Stations of the Cross. Fr. Anthony suggested that, as Antioch and ROCOR both have Western Rite congregations and both have to deal with these concerns, we present position papers to Metropolitan Philip and Metropolitan Hilarion for their rulings in order to have one Western Rite practice on some of the more controversial issues within our rite. It would also be helpful to provide Western Rite

clergy with hierarchical authorization and with explanations for practices which may be controversial (or, if the bishops say that we shouldn't be doing something, that will also set-

tle the matter). All the Western Rite clergy present support the continued observance of the feast of Corpus Christi and the offering of Benediction and Stations of the Cross. There was not consensus, however, on the feast of the Sacred Heart. The discussion in these sessions was charitable, thoughtful and helpful. One of the Continuing Anglican observers was dumbfounded, saying that he had never witnessed such considered and healthy theological discussions in a group of clergy. We also discussed the advantages and the dangers of having a clergy email list for discussion of concerns; obvi-

ously we do much better when we can sit down and talk face to face.

Fr. Edward thanked those assembled for including us in this historic gathering and Fr. Anthony (and

many others) expressed their strong desire that this might be the first of many such cooperative meetings. As the psalmist declares, "how good and joyful a thing it is, for brethren to dwell together in unity!"



Bp Basil visited in September. The October Fest luncheon hostesses. The Woolleys hosted the Churchwomen's Fellowship Dinner which was very popular this year and included Garrett and Sam Trant and family. The weather was perfect for outdoor activities and much conversation on the extensive patio decks. Thanks to all for the food preparations and hospitality.





# A most "Complete Church Calendar" for the Year of Grace 2012

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THIS CALENDAR has full color plates of English stained glass for every Month. It is full of Saints and observances of the Universal Church. It should be a most attractive aid to children, youths, and adults in learning the incredible richness of the Christian Year. It should be helpful to clergy and Church workers in planning Parish and School events in harmony with the customary observances day by day. Of course, there cannot be a totally successful Calendar that bridges Orthodox, Catholic, and Anglican variants. However, we think the result of making a "chock full of Saints" Calendar is instructive, fun, and practical in many instances.

This "Complete Church Calendar" for 2012 has the boxes already filled to every corner with Saints' Days and Holy Days.

The most popular book in Russia before the Communist era was "The Little Flowers" of St. Francis of Assisi. Often the suffering laity in their prayers find more spiritual resources in the company of Saints than the various official calendars would suggest.

The "Complete Church Calendar" is available with the Western Easter Date, 8 April 2012 for Catholics and Anglicans. (West2010)

We offer a similar edition with the Orthodox Paschal date, 15 April 2012 (Byz2012) All the days (Lent, Holy Week, etc.) dependent on the Easter Date are calculated accordingly.

And, in third place, we offer a narrowly Orthodox Calendar (Ex2012) without most of the popular Saints



and yet geared to the public worship of the Orthodox parishes. And so three Church Calendars for 2012:

- 1) Western Easter date  
West2012
- 2) Byzantine Easter date  
Byz2012
- 3) Orthodox AWRV  
Exclusive of most Saints  
Ex2012

The "Complete Church Calendar" is a wonderful teaching device for children to learn the richness of the Church Year in her Saints and Feasts and Fasts. We entirely recom-

mend the Saints as good companions through this life.  
*Ora pro nobis.*

The "Exclusive Calendar" Ex2012, is a safe guide for Orthodox clergy who plan the parochial Ordo for parish Liturgies and Events.

*Each full page is 8.5 x 11 inches or twice the size of the sample provided here.*

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## An Italian Expedition with an Academic Semester in Florence

*Sarah Elizabeth Greenlee has announced her plan to spend a Semester abroad as part of her Vanderbilt University program.*

HAVING BEEN FORTUNATE enough to accompany Fr. John, Noah and my father on a short pilgrimage to Venice, Rome and northern Italy this past May, it is with great pleasure that I have the opportunity to return to Italy to spend four months in Florence studying art, history and the Italian language this coming Spring.

Beginning January 18th, God willing, I will be living with 2-4 roommates comprised of both Vanderbilt students and Italian students from the *Università degli Studi di Firenze*, an institution whose roots trace back to 1321 (surpassing the history of our country!).

The apartment is located in the heart of Florence with some rooms providing a view of the famous Duomo (Santa Maria del Fiore). Besides this iconic church, I intend to frequently visit the unparalleled collection of Renaissance art and sculpture at the Uffizi Gallery, Michelangelo's famous David, the Pitti Palace, and Santa Croce, which, Professor Woolley has illumined me, houses the tombs of not only Galileo and Michelangelo, but Machiavelli and Dante as well.

My roommates and I will primarily be cooking meals in the apartment and hopefully I will be using some of the tips Noah taught me to prepare delicious Italian dishes for us to enjoy.

Along with a professor, the group and I will embark on a traveling seminar during the semester. Destinations such as Rome, Siena, Pisa and Tuscany are also weekend visits I hope to embark on.

I hope to return from my experience abroad with the following:

1. A passion for the Italian language. While I hope to become conversational in Italian during my semester at the University, I want to return to the United States with a desire to continue utilizing and learning the language. The little immersion that I had while there in May has indicated it is an amorous, rich language which contrasts significantly with cacophonous German I spent my high school years studying.
2. The ability to apply the warmth of the Italian culture and people to my day-to-day interactions. My brief stay in

Italy enlightened me to the genuine love families have for one another, towards foreigners and among generations. I hope to communicate this sense of compassion to my fellow Vanderbilt classmates.

3. A developed and sophisticated palate for all things Vino!

I am expecting a visit from my mom and dad and if anybody else happens to be in the area please contact me through my family and hopefully I will be competent and knowledgeable by February to show you around. \$



Fr. Lester Michael Bundy writes: I am planning a pre-Advent retreat at St. Columba for Saturday, November 19th from 9:00 AM to Noon. I am encouraging Oblates to attend but it will be open to anyone who wants to come. If anyone at St. Marks is interested they would be warmly welcomed. A free-will offering for the support of Christminster will be available.

Our time with Bp Jerome and Dom James of Christminster at the Western Rite Conference was a great blessing to all and especially for us oblates.

### THE LION

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address correction requested

The Lion is an unofficial and uncompensated newsletter of St. Mark's Parish of Denver, Colorado.

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and soon we hope from EOC.org



A LETTER TO THE FAITHFUL FROM THE SENIOR  
WARDEN, ST. MARK'S PARISH  
20 OCTOBER 2011

“AMERICANS OF ALL AGES, all conditions, and all dispositions, constantly form associations ... The Americans make associations to give entertainments, to found establishments for education, to build inns, to construct churches, to diffuse books, to send missionaries to the antipodes; and in this manner they found hospitals, prisons, and schools ... Wherever, at the head of some new undertaking, you see the government in France, or a man of rank in England, in the United States you will be sure to find an association. Amongst democratic nations ... all the citizens are independent and feeble; they can do hardly anything by themselves, and none of them can oblige his fellow-men to lend him their assistance. They all, therefore, fall into a state of incapacity, if they do not learn voluntarily to help each other.” Alexis De Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*.

Saint Mark's Orthodox Church is a wonderful example of the voluntary associations De Tocqueville wrote about in 1835. Called by God, clergy and parishioners gather every day in association at St. Mark's to give glory to the Holy Trinity. Every Sunday we have a more complete gathering, and build our association stronger while in the Divine Liturgy, in Sunday school, in fellowship, decorating for Christmas, or even repairing things around the church.

As an Orthodox Christian, I cannot imagine another way to behave. In the Bible we read not only of the Eucharist, but of helping the poor, orphans, and widows, and of the Great Commission. These are activities done in the Body of Christ, in association with our fellow parishioners. We do them in association with our Holy Mother Church; in our case, the Diocese and Archdiocese. They are done with other Christian associations such as Lancelot Andrewes Press and the Benedictine Fellowship of Saint Laurence.

We are called by God to be in and act in associations with our fellow Christians. De Tocqueville identified that Americans are hardly able to do anything of importance without a good association. He followed on with the reckoning that if we fail in this, if we do not bolster each other and combine our resources, then we will fall short of the mark. God has given us everything that we have, and we cannot allow ourselves to fall short.

With God as our Helper, we can succeed. As Americans, we have been gifted with the desire to voluntarily band together. As Orthodox Christians, we are further gifted with the purpose to build this association to worship God, to raise our children, to help each other, and to spread the Gospel.

The critical outcome of De Tocqueville's American voluntary associations is that these associations of ordinary Americans are better, stronger, and more effective than an individual European lord acting alone. St. Mark's parish, too, is much more effective when we act together to carry the load, rather than hoping a scant few will carry the burden for us.

As the year closes, now is the time for you to prayerfully decide what your next year's pledge will be. Your timely pledge allows us to budget for the next year, and is a requirement to be a voting member at the annual meeting. Plan for your pledge to St. Mark's in context with your entire tithe. I do not expect that 100% of your charitable giving goes to St. Mark's. There are many other wonderful and godly organizations that deserve your support. But since St. Mark's is your church home, and is where you have voluntarily decided to associate yourself, she should also receive a significant portion of your tithe.

When planning, throw out the taxes you paid since you never see them anyway, and Caesar will get his due -- “Render unto Caesar.” Heck, toss out your IRA or 401(k), since someone will find a way to tax that sooner or later, too. With what is left, calculate your tithe. The original Biblical tithe was 10%, and even higher in some years. Under the New Testament, it is emphasized that all we have is God's, but St. Ambrose, St. John Chrysostom, and others come out strongly for the tithe. Pray about it, and remember that pledges are the vast majority of the income of the parish. Together, in association, we will be stronger than we are as individuals, and our burden will be light.

Yours in Christ,

Reader Andrew Diederich  
Senior Warden

*Please find a form for Pledge for the Year of Grace 2012 and an Envelope in this newsletter. More copies are readily available. A new book from Sociology Prof. Rodney Stark The Triumph of Christianity will be available this week and the sociological results may be both very good news for our Country and a surprise for the professionally negative in the Church and public life.*



